

# Parishes of St John XXIII & St Joseph, Birtley



Incorporating: **Our Blessed Lady Immaculate**, Washington;  
**Our Lady Queen of Peace**, Penshaw; **St Bede**, Usworth;  
**St John Boste**, Oxclose; **St Joseph**, Birtley  
 Fr Martin Morris, Parish Priest, Tel: 0191 4163583  
 Administrator: Audrey Huntley tel: 0191 4163583  
 (Tuesday & Wednesday 8am—1pm, Thursday 11am—4pm & Friday 12– 5pm)  
 Email: [StJohn23rd@diocesehn.org.uk](mailto:StJohn23rd@diocesehn.org.uk)  
 Parish Website: <https://www.washingtoncatholic.org.uk>



## In the Partnership of Benedict

Birtley, Chester-le-Street, Penshaw, Sacriston, Washington

### TWENTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - 16TH - 17TH AUGUST 2025 Year C

Saturday 16th August	St Joseph	5pm	<b>People of the Parish</b>
<b>Vigil</b>	St Bede	5pm	<b>People of the Parish</b>
Sunday 17th August	St John Boste	9:30am	<b>Priest's Intention</b>
<b>20th Sunday in Ordinary Time</b>	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	<b>Holy Souls</b>
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am*	<b>Theresa Madden Anniversary RIP</b>

#### First Reading: Jeremiah in the Cistern

##### Jeremiah 38:4-6, 8-10

In those days: The officials said to the king, 'Let this man, Jeremiah, be put to death, for he is weakening the hands of the soldiers who are left in this city, and the hands of all the people, by speaking such words to them. For this man is not seeking the welfare of this people, but their harm.' King Zedekiah said, 'Behold, he is in your hands, for the king can do nothing against you.' So they took Jeremiah and cast him into the cistern of Malchiah, the king's son, which was in the court of the guard, letting Jeremiah down by ropes. And there was no water in the cistern, but only mud, and Jeremiah sank in the mud. Ebed-melech went from the king's house and said to the king, 'My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they did to Jeremiah the prophet by casting him into the cistern, and he will die there of hunger, for there is no bread left in the city.' Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, 'Take thirty men with you from here, and lift Jeremiah the prophet out of the cistern before he dies.'

#### Response to the Psalm: Lord, make haste to help me!

#### Second Reading: Jesus, the Founder and Perfector of our Faith.

##### Hebrews 12:1-4

Brothers and Sisters: Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or faint-hearted. In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood.

#### Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia. My sheep hear my voice, says the Lord, and I know them and they follow me. Alleluia.

#### The Gospel: Fire to the Earth.

##### Luke 12:49-53

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples, 'I came to cast fire on the earth, and would that it were already kindled! I have a baptism to be baptised with, and how great is my distress until it is accomplished! Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. For from now on in one house there will be five divided: three against two and two against three. They will be divided, father against son and son against father; mother against daughter and daughter against mother; mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.'

Fr Martin Morris	0191 416 3583	Deacon Frank O'Neill	0779 115 5845
Fr Martin Wheaton	0770 996 1040	Deacon Tony Joy	0779 989 3419
Fr Luke Wilkinson	0191 649 8257		

## Mass Times & Intentions - Week Beginning Monday 18th August 2025 (Streamed Mass \*)

Day	Church	Time	
Monday 18th August	St Bede	10am	<b>Kath Beavers RIP</b>
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	7pm*	<b>Brian Crick RIP</b>
Tuesday 19th August <b>Ss Oswin &amp; John Eudes</b>	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	<b>Margaret &amp; Edward Clark</b>
	St Joseph	7pm	<b>Terry Cantwell RIP</b>
Wednesday 20th August <b>St Bernard</b>	St Bede	10am	<b>Private Intention (JW)</b>
	St John Boste	7pm	<b>Paul Iley RIP 54th Birthday</b>
Thursday 21st August <b>St Pius X</b>	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am*	<b>Holy Souls</b>
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am	<b>Memorial Mass : Tom Black</b>
	St Joseph	12 Noon	<b>Nancy Loughlin RIP</b>
Friday 22nd August <b>Our Lady, Mother and Queen</b>	St John Boste	10am*	<b>Norman Smithson RIP Birthday Memory</b>
	St Joseph	10am	<b>Alexander Ryan</b>
Saturday 23rd August <b>St Rose of Lima</b>	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	10am*	<b>Teresa Laidler</b>
	<b>Vigil</b>	St Joseph	5pm
Sunday 24th August <b>The 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time</b>	St Bede	5pm	<b>Alan &amp; Anne Carr RIP</b>
	St John Boste	9:30am	<b>John O Brien RIP</b>
	Our Lady Queen of Peace	10am	<b>Dorothy Sweeney RIP</b>
	Our Blessed Lady Immaculate	11am*	<b>People of the Parish</b>

I remember during my school days signing up for a sports day race – it was an endurance run. At the time, I had no idea what this really meant, all I knew was I had to run and get to the finish line. When that first whistle blew, I sprinted with all my might around the track on that hot summer's day, and after not too long, I realised my mistake. I made it around the track (and in the process, was lapped by my other friends taking part in the race), and realised that, had I kept a steady pace, I would not have ended up with my head in my hands at the end of the track regretting about every decision I'd made in the last thirty minutes.

Now why do I bring this up, over ten years after the event? And no, it's not simply to out myself as a poor runner! In today's Second Reading, we hear St Paul's letter to the Hebrews, where he tells those members of the early Church to 'run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus'. That word 'endurance' really stands out – St Paul could have very easily omitted this for a very similar message.

Yet, here we are reminded that this is not a race against time. Indeed, we are not racing against our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ to see who can reach the Lord the quickest. In this word 'endurance', we see our human experience. We see our experience of joys and sorrows, of triumphs and failures, and of living up to following Christ and falling short. If we run the race of faith with endurance, we are able to get up after a set-back, and keep running towards Jesus.

The life of an activated, missionary disciple is not one of ease and comfort, but one of set-backs, trials and continuing, even when it gets tough. So, this week, run the race that is set before you with endurance – not comparing yourself to those on the track next to you, but keeping your eyes fixed on the Lord, who will sustain you to keep on running to Him.

**Hannah Bartlett**

**Masses are generally live-streamed daily at 10am every day, except Monday, streamed at 7pm, and alternate Sundays when Mass is live-streamed at either 10am or 11am. An \* on the Mass table indicates streamed Masses.**

Please [click here](#) to view from one of our Churches.  
(or <https://www.youtube.com/@parishofstjohnxxiii>)

## What's On in the Parish

### Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:

Our Lady Queen of Peace each Friday 2pm - 3pm.  
St. Joseph's each Thursday evening 6.30pm - 7.30pm. I do encourage as many of you as possible to spend some time in quiet prayer with Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration.

### The Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Our Lady Queen of Peace - Thursday morning after Mass.  
St Joseph -Thursday after Mass.  
St John Boste - Friday morning after Mass.  
Our Blessed Lady Immaculate - Saturday morning after Mass.  
St Bede- Saturday after Vigil Mass.

**Devotion to our Blessed Lady at St Bede's** - The Holy Rosary will be recited every Monday morning after 10am Mass. If anyone would like to remember a loved one by bringing fresh flowers they would be very welcome and they will be displayed by the flower ladies, all welcome

**OLOF (Our Lady's over 50's club)** meet in the Lindisfame Room at St Bede's Church on Tuesdays at 1pm. All welcome.

**Appeal for new volunteers – Can you help out?.** We are blessed with many parishioners who give of their time and effort in enabling our Parishes to run so well, I am very grateful for everyone's support. However, we are in need of more help with the following areas of Parish life: Accounts/Book-keeping, Administration/Office Work, Catechists for Baptism, Gardening/Grounds Maintenance. If you think you could help out in any of these areas please visit the following link and leave your details, and one of the Priests will contact you. **Paper copies of the form are also available at the back of church.** Thank you, Fr Martin Morris. <https://forms.churchdesk.com/f/nbyAuLzPpY>

**St Bede's Toddler Group** is now closed for the school holidays. Several of our members have left to start nursery or school in September. We have vacancies for next term. We welcome babies once they have their first injections and until they go to nursery or school. The session is on Monday mornings from 9.30am-11am in St Bede's Parish Hall and costs £2. The children can play, do creative activities, have refreshments and enjoy singing. We restart on Monday 8 September. To save a place text Joan Formosa on 07504 579591.

**Streaming Mass from our Churches.** Please note we no longer use Church Services TV as our Churches now stream on our YouTube Channel, <https://www.youtube.com/@parishofstjohnxxiii>.

**Our Blessed Lady Immaculate** will be one of the locations hosting an exciting new initiative coming to the UK, that seeks to form lay people for mission. The 'Dominican Lay Mission' project brings people to discover their individual charisms and gifts and discern practical ways to put these to use in the service of the Gospel, in their secular contexts and so sanctify the world. The course takes place over three years, for 26 weeks of each year, and comprises a

weekly one hour video to watch at home in your own time; a fellowship meeting twice per month at Our Lady's on a Friday at 7.30pm; an annual retreat and a day workshop. The course starts in September. There will be an information evening at Our Lady's at 7.30pm on Monday 8 September. For more information or to register your interest, email [lay.mission@english.op.org](mailto:lay.mission@english.op.org) or speak to Fr Luke.

**Our Blessed Lady Immaculate Gardens** - We would welcome donations of any unwanted gardening tools such as forks, spades, trowels, secateurs etc. for volunteers keeping the borders tidy. Please bring them to church or ring Chris O'Neill on 07815162153 if you need them collected. Thank you.

**Holy Communion for the Sick and Housebound:** If you know of any parishioners who are unable to get to Mass and would like Holy Communion brought to them at home, please give their name, address and telephone number to any of our Priests.

### Pilgrimage to Holy Island – Saturday 13 September 2025

An update regarding the above event. We have arranged for two coaches to collect everyone which will be leaving from St Joseph's, Birtley and Our Lady Queen of Peace, Penschaw at 8.30am. If you have not already done so, could you please provide the £10 per person charge as soon as possible to go towards the cost of the coaches. There are still a few places available on the coaches. If you would like to go, please contact Malcolm Bengston on 07746 973132.

**Newsletter emails** - Please note that we are currently having an issue emailing the newsletter to [@btinternet.com](mailto:@btinternet.com) email addresses, as the messages are being blocked as spam. We will resolve this as soon as possible.

## Other News

### MARYS PLACE - St Mary's Cathedral - opposite Central Station

Every Monday morning between 10am and 1pm Mary's Place Community cafe opens its doors and offers a warm, welcoming smile that extends dignity, companionship and hope to anyone who is in need - they may be homeless, poor or feeling alone. It's a place where everyone is known by name, where they can share their stories or simply sit in silence as they share a hot meal together. It's more than a refuge it's a community - a reminder that no one walks alone.

We have a team of volunteers who do various roles from preparing food, serving our guests as well as washing dishes and, of course, making our guests welcome. We work on a rota basis, usually once a month. To find out more and how to join our team please contact [marys.place@outlook.com](mailto:marys.place@outlook.com).

**Year of Jubilee Calendar** - A calendar of all the key dates and events for the Year of Jubilee, currently from June to December 2025, in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle has been produced and will be updated periodically. **Download the calendar [here](#).** You can also view or download the Vatican's calendar of major events by visiting their Jubilee website [here](#).

**Minsteracres - Rosary Rally, Saturday 16 August 2025 from 12 noon to 3pm** - Please bring a packed lunch. The day will commence with the celebration of Mass at 12 noon followed by the Rosary Rally and Benediction from 2pm.

**Minsteracres Retreats** - We offer a varied programme of day, weekend and week-long events throughout the year. Please see the programme details by [clicking here](#).

**Little Sisters of the Poor Appeal** - David and Theresa O'Neill ask you to support their fundraising for the Sisters through their collections of stamps, foreign currency, old or broken gold and silver and military medals. To date they have raised over £16,200 by these means. If you can help, contact them at: David and Theresa O'Neill, 34 Morston Drive, Newcastle upon Tyne NE15 7RZ Tel: 0191 264 5771 Email: [david-oneill3@sky.com](mailto:david-oneill3@sky.com)

**Alive in HOPE: A Church for MISSION.** Bishop Stephen invites you to a **Jubilee Day** on Saturday 27 September, from 10 am to 3pm at Cardinal Hume Catholic School in Gateshead. Everyone is welcome! There'll be guest speakers from the Prisons' Chaplaincy and the Justice & Peace Refugee Project, and a choice of seminars/forums to reawaken and empower us for mission. This is an opportunity to connect with old friends and new, and to celebrate our diocesan family as we explore what a Church in Mission invites us to be and do! There will be Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and a prayer space in the chapel, and praise and worship led by Durham musicians 'Set A Fire'. Take a look around the marketplace where there'll be stands and gifts from some of our Catholic partners and groups. Registration and refreshments from 9.15am, but please bring a packed lunch. Ample parking is available and entry is FREE but please register at <https://bit.ly/DHNAlive25> where you'll also find more information about the seminars you'll be able to join during the day. For enquiries and parish/group bookings telephone Amy on 0191 2433316. Search on Facebook, X and Bluesky using the hashtag #DHNAlive25 for the latest information and updates.

**Safeguarding** - The agency that oversees safeguarding in the Catholic Church has observed 'good practice' in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle across all eight of the recognised National Safeguarding Standards. In an audit report recently published, the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) in particular hailed major improvements in Church leadership, governance, ministry, culture and the care of those people who have been harmed. [Click here](#) to read the CSSA final report. [Click here](#) to read the Diocesan statement in full. [Click here](#) to read the CSSA statement in full.

**"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor"**. Thinking about a vocation to the Priesthood? For more information, speak to your Parish Priest or contact the Vocations Promoter: 01207 299 012 or [click here](#)

**Evangelisation for the Terrified** - '*Evangelising for the Terrified*', written and produced within the Diocese, is a practical, light-hearted resource for anyone wondering how to get started in sharing their faith. Download a copy [here](#).

**The Eucharist: A Gift to be Nurtured** - As part of our aim to promote growth and knowledge of the Eucharist, the Association of the Eucharist offer [The Eucharist: A Gift to be Nurtured](#), which gives us words from Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis to guide time before the Blessed Sacrament. This resource can be used by both individuals and groups.

**Could you be a CAFOD Schools Volunteer?** Volunteers are wanted to help children/ students learn about the work of CAFOD. Could you help your local school deliver assemblies and/or workshops that encourage young people to put faith into action to help others? It would only require a few hours of your time each term and you would be assisting your local community to work together for the Common Good. No experience is necessary, and full support and training will be given. Find out more [here](#).

**Will you help CAFOD to support farmers around the world in the fight to keep their rights to their own seeds?** As the official aid agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales, CAFOD is reaching out to people living in poverty with practical help. But CAFOD's mission also calls on us to challenge the structures that bring about poverty and injustice in the first place. This is at the core of the [Fix the Food System](#) campaign which was supported last year by parishes in each of the 22 dioceses in England and Wales. This CAFOD initiative aims to re-think the current global food system and, as Pope Francis says, transform it for the benefit of people and planet. Globally, just [nine crops account for more than 65%](#) of all crop production, which are traded and transported by a few big businesses. This lack of crop diversity makes the current food system unfit to cope with the challenges brought about by the climate crisis and also makes it unsuitable for quickly adapting to disease and conflict.

**What is God? Philosophical, Christian and Islamic Approaches, 22 – 25 August 2025** - Our annual course in partnership with CEPHAS will look at the nature and knowledge of God from a pre-religious, philosophical understanding, before comparing the Islamic concept of God with the Christian, leaning on St Thomas Aquinas' elaboration of the Trinity and the Incarnation. For more information and to book please [click here](#).

## Reflections

**Diocesan Weekly reflections** can be found by [clicking here](#).

**Examen** - Please follow this link to go to [Pray as You Go](#)

## Catholic Social Teaching

For the Newsletter, [click here](#).

**Prayers** - If you would like to request prayers from the parish community for someone who is sick, or recently deceased, please click on the links below and complete the necessary forms. This will enable their names to be included in private prayer and during various Masses.

[For Prayers for the Sick](#)  
[For Prayers for the Deceased](#)

or ring 0191 4163583

**Finance** - Standing Order forms and Gift Aid forms are available by clicking on the following links:

[For St John XXIII](#)      [For St Joseph's](#)  
or ring 0191 4163583.

## Sick and Recently Deceased

- To view the sick and recently deceased list [please click here](#). To amend the information on the list [click here](#).

**Parish Newsletter** If you have any comments you wish to make about the Parish Newsletter, [please click here](#).

For the latest information, please go to any of the following Websites:

[Parish of St John XXIII](#)  
[Parish of St Joseph's](#)  
[Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle](#)

**All the Links you will ever need!**



Please [click here](#) or Scan the QR Code with your mobile phone to go to a site containing All the Links You'll Ever Need.

[To post a notice on this Newsletter, please click stjoh23bulletin@gmail.com](#)